

Sanctions

Updated 20 July 2022

We may impose a disciplinary sanction against a firm or individual, where we are satisfied that they have committed a serious breach of our Standards and Regulations. Individuals include solicitors, registered European lawyers, registered foreign lawyers, employees and managers of all firms we authorise.

Disciplinary sanctions include a fine or a rebuke. In some case we may impose both sanctions. They are broadly intended to discipline the person to prevent similar behaviour by them or others, maintain standards and uphold public confidence in the profession.

When considering if a fine or a rebuke is the right outcome, we will have regard to our Regulatory and Disciplinary Procedure Rules and apply our Enforcement Strategy.

Fine

The amount of financial penalty we can impose on individuals and firms will depend on the type of firm, or the type of firm an individual works in.

For solicitors, traditional law firms (recognised bodies or recognised sole practices) and the individuals who work in them, the maximum financial penalty we can impose is £25,000 (introduced in a change to legislation on 20 July 2022 and applied to all cases except where we have already sent a notice to the respondent).

For licensed bodies (Alternative Business Structures or ABS) and the individuals (including solicitors) which work in them, we can impose a financial penalty, ourselves, of up to £50 million for an individual or up to £250 million for the entity.

We may publish the details of the fine if we consider it is in the public interest to do so. A decision to publish is a separate decision to the decision to impose the fine. Both the decision to issue the sanction and the decision to publish can be appealed to the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal.

Where we direct a fine be paid it is recoverable as a debt due to us and is [forfeited to the Crown](https://guidance.sra.org.uk/consumers/using-solicitor/legal-jargon-explained#forfeit) [<https://guidance.sra.org.uk/consumers/using-solicitor/legal-jargon-explained#forfeit>].

Rebuke

We can rebuke both firms and individuals we regulate. Both the decision to give a written rebuke and the decision to publish can be appealed to the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal.

We may publish the details of the rebuke if we consider it is in the [public interest](https://guidance.sra.org.uk/consumers/using-solicitor/legal-jargon-explained#public-interest) [https://guidance.sra.org.uk/consumers/using-solicitor/legal-jargon-explained#public-interest] to do so. A decision to publish is a separate decision to the decision to impose the sanction.

Reprimand/severe reprimand

Where we are satisfied that a [firm](https://guidance.sra.org.uk/consumers/using-solicitor/legal-jargon-explained#firm) [https://guidance.sra.org.uk/consumers/using-solicitor/legal-jargon-explained#firm] or individual has failed to comply with our rules involving breaches which occurred wholly before 1 June 2010, we may issue either a reprimand or a severe reprimand. This is a form of disciplinary sanction applied before new powers were granted to us by the [Legal Services Act 2007](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2007/29/contents) [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2007/29/contents]

A decision to reprimand or severely reprimand will not be published, unless it forms part of a [regulatory settlement agreement](https://guidance.sra.org.uk/consumers/solicitor-check/agreements/#rsa) [https://guidance.sra.org.uk/consumers/solicitor-check/agreements/#rsa].

Important notes

Not all regulatory decisions are published—read more about [our approach to publication](https://guidance.sra.org.uk/consumers/solicitor-check/policy/) [https://guidance.sra.org.uk/consumers/solicitor-check/policy/].

Only decisions made since early 2008 are published on this site. Most decisions remain on the site for a minimum of three years.

For the most up-to-date and complete picture of an individual's regulatory record, please [contact us](https://guidance.sra.org.uk/contactus/) [https://guidance.sra.org.uk/contactus/].

Read more about [how we regulate](https://guidance.sra.org.uk/consumers/who-we-are/sra-regulate/) [https://guidance.sra.org.uk/consumers/who-we-are/sra-regulate/].